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offers. You'll also want to provide a convenient way for potential clients to get in touch with you regarding those services so a Contact Us page or an online ...

Mary Girsch-Bock • Oct. 24, 2017



Years ago, when client interaction typically included frequent visits to your office, one of your main concerns was likely ensuring that your office maintained a professional appearance at all times. Today, some clients may still visit your office,

but the typical point of entry for new clients, particularly younger clients, is likely

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impression. Make sure it's a good one.

And while first impressions are important, your website needs to do much than simply look professional. It needs to be compelling enough that a web visitor will remain more on the site longer than a minute or two. It needs to load quickly, because web visitors aren't going to wait longer than 30 seconds in order to see just how compelling your website is. And if you're lucky enough that they do stick around, you better be sure that the site is easy to navigate and that the content is easily accessible.

Social media is another area that cannot be overlooked. Your website has to be able to integrate with popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and others. Compatibility with mobile devices is also imperative. Your website must be configured so that potential clients using smart phones and tablets can access your site as readily as those using a standard web browser from their desktop or laptop.

Your website should also offer an easily accessible list of services that your firm offers. You'll also want to provide a convenient way for potential clients to get in touch with you regarding those services so a Contact Us page or an online appointment form are important as well. Other good options for your website include a portal for current clients to access and upload documents, financial calculators that your clients can utilize, and a regularly updated blog will go a long way towards retaining those clients.

While your clients may also be in the market for a website, the products reviewed in this issue are designed specifically for accounting firms. The do-it-yourself products reviewed in this issue include:

- [Integer from Tenenz](#)

- [Web Builder CS from Thomson Reuters](#)

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- [GetNetSet Websites for Accounting Firms](#)
- [CPAsites from CPAsites.com](#)
- [Build Your Firm Accounting Website Packages from Build Your Firm](#)

You'll need to ask yourself a few questions prior to deciding which web builder application would be right for your firm's needs. Questions like how much of the work can you or your staff do? If the answer is little, if, any, you'll want to make sure to utilize a software vendor that can handle most of the work for you. Do you make frequent changes to your website? If so, you'll want the ability to make those changes in-house. Are you willing to pay extra to have a custom site designed, or will your needs be met with a template that can be customized for your firm?

For those unsure of what they're looking for, many of the website building vendors offer a free trial that can be utilized prior to purchase.

Many of the products reviewed in this issue have been on the market for years, but have made a great effort to continue to update their product so that the latest features are available. So, whether you're looking to update your current website, or are in the market for a whole new look, the products reviewed in this issue are a great place to start. While no one ever said that creating a professional website was easy, you may be surprised at just how quickly you can have a sleek new website up and running.

Firm Management

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